



# GT 101

## Introduction to the U.S. American Classroom

# OVERVIEW

- Academics at Georgia Tech
- Safety and Your Visa Status
- U.S. Culture







# Academics

# Canvas

- One-stop Shop for Your Coursework:
  - Access your syllabus
  - Submit assignments
  - Review additional readings/resources
  - Engage in class discussions
  - Email professor/classmates
- Download the app for iOS and Android!



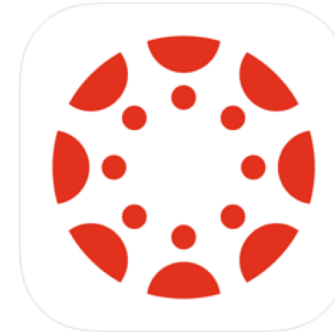
## Canvas Student

Instructure Education

Everyone

⚠ You don't have any devices.

 Add to Wishlist



## Canvas Student 4+

Instructure Inc.

#11 in Education

★★★★★ 4.7, 1.1M Ratings

Free



# The Syllabus

A syllabus is the document provided by the professor which establishes the:

- Course schedule for exams and homework
- Grading expectations
- Materials required for course
- Attendance Policy

**Syllabus as a contract.** As a contract, the syllabus states what the professor expects of students during the semester.

**Syllabus as a guide to the course.** The syllabus documents learning objectives, the topics covered in the course, and assessment measures.

**Syllabus as a learning tool.** A syllabus may also include resources for success, references to course content, information about the professor's teaching philosophy, a professor's standards for assignments, and suggestions or tips for how to approach the course.



# Academic Integrity

Students should review the university academic integrity statement to understand the academic and student conduct penalties associated with violations of the academic integrity principles.

Students should inform themselves about the concept of **plagiarism** and seek help from professors if they need to clarification on appropriate citation of academic references.





# Classroom Culture

- Informal Class Atmosphere\*\*\*
  - More casual than many cultures
  - Professors' casual posture/manner e.g., sitting on desk, walking around, playing music
  - Students wearing pajamas and/or sandals; eating and/or drinking
- Casual Professor-Student Relationships\*\*\*
  - Relationships are less vertical than many cultures
  - Professors are more "Guide on the Side" and less "Sage on the Stage"
  - They might request you call them by their first name
  - Use Dr. or Professor + family name to be safe (Example: James Smith= Dr./Professor Smith)

*\*\*\*Every professor will establish their own rules and expectations for their classes. Some will be more formal, while many will be less formal than typical classrooms outside of the U.S.*



# Classroom Culture

- Class Expectations
  - Expectations are listed in syllabus and usually discussed at beginning of course
  - May be graded on participation - be prepared to be “put on the spot” and “speak your mind”
  - Critical/independent thinking and ability to express your ideas (speaking & writing)
- Group Work
  - Group projects and presentations are common
  - Low-context, task-oriented communication style common within groups







# Safety and Your Visa Status



# Safety and Law Enforcement at Georgia Tech

- Beware phone call scams
- You can always call 911 for emergencies
- You have rights. If you'd like to learn more, the ACLU is a great resource: [aclu.org](https://www.aclu.org)





# Alcohol Laws in the U.S.

You must be 21 or older to legally buy or consume alcoholic beverages.

Public intoxication is an arrestable offense.

If you purchase alcohol for someone under the age of 21, it is a violation of the law and you could face criminal penalties.

It is illegal to consume alcohol and operate a motor vehicle. It is also **deadly**.





# Visa Revocation

- Electric system in place between police departments and U.S. Department of State
- Arrests, not just convictions can lead to visa revocation
- If your visa is revoked it is recommended that you stay within the U.S. until the end of your program.
- May or may not be notified if your visa revoked
- An individual police officer does not have the power or authority to revoke a visa.
  - Interacting with police, calling 911, reporting a crime – these things do not necessarily negatively impact your visa status or cause your visa to be revoked. You have rights.

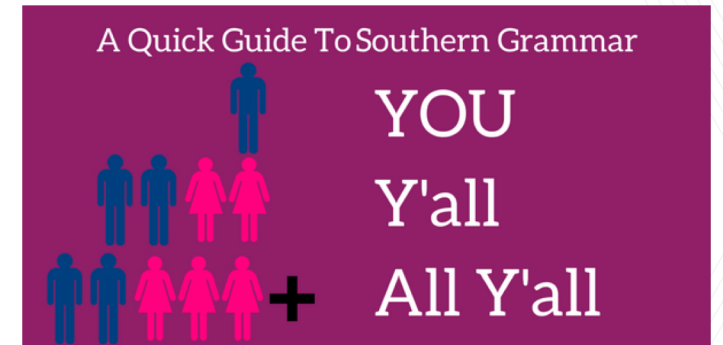




# US Culture

# Language Challenges

- Fast rate of speech- difficult to follow lecture and take notes
- Jargon (specialized language) and colloquial speech
  - Acronyms: FYI, ASAP, AKA, etc.
  - Idiomatic expressions: “I’m feeling under the weather today.”
  - Phrasal verbs: hang out, hang with, hang on, hang up, hang in there
  - Slang: “I pulled two all-nighters in a row. I’m beat. Gonna crash hard tonight.”
  - Southern dialect and accent: “supper” = dinner and “dinner”= lunch
- Sarcasm and irony
- Email etiquette: WRITING LIKE THIS= shouting in the U.S





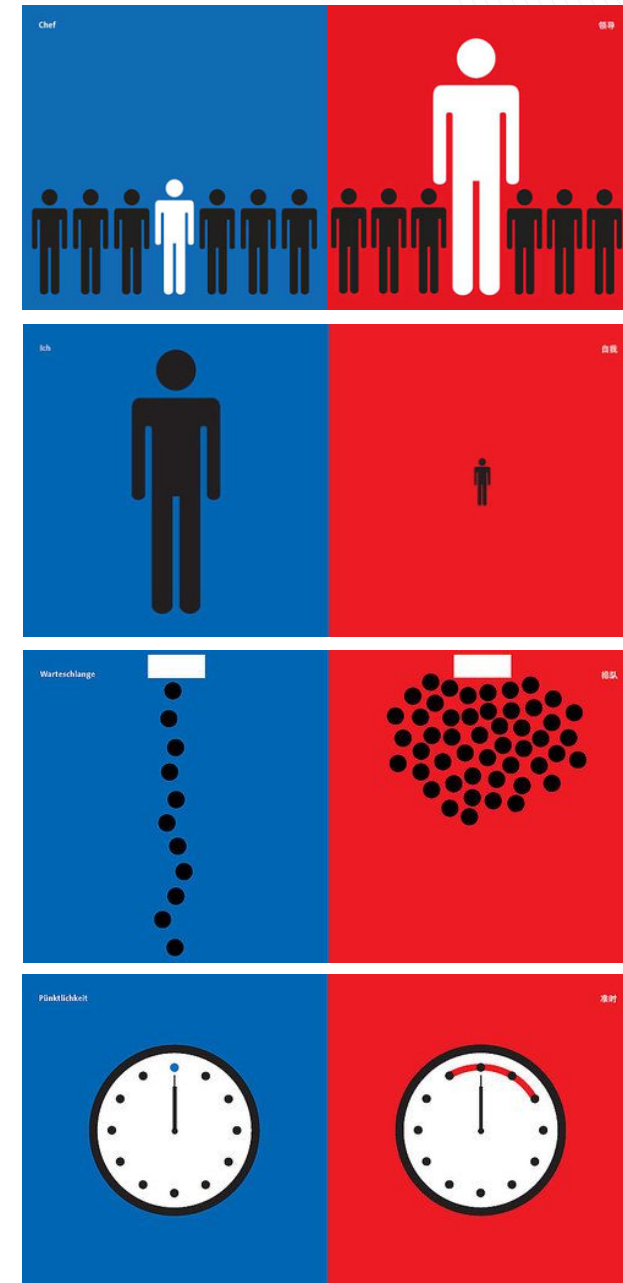
# Values

Generally speaking, what do you think might be some important values in American culture?

- If a business meeting begins at 10:00am, what time should you arrive?
- If you have a doctor's appointment at 9:00am, what time should you arrive?
- If you are going to meet your friend for coffee at 11:00am, what time should you arrive? How long would you stay?
- **If your friend is having a large party that starts at 2:00pm, what time should you arrive? How long would you stay?**
- Are deadlines generally flexible or are they generally strictly adhered to?
- Do people need to stand in line or is it first come, first serve?
- What is more important – the greater good of the society or the individual welfare of a person?
- Is it better to be selfless and cooperative or independent and assertive?
- **Is it considered rude or is it appropriate to talk with acquaintances about money matters?**
- Generally speaking, is it insulting or is it caring to comment to someone about their weight?
- When greeting an acquaintance, is it more common to give a handshake or a hug?

# American Values

- Equality
  - All people are equal regardless of income, position, or gender
  - Less hierarchy/formality present in day-to-day relationships
- Exceptionalism (“We’re Special”)
  - Country where you can achieve success regardless of your beginnings (“The American Dream”)
  - Patriotism (national pride) and popular belief the U.S. is superior to other countries in many ways
- Privacy/Space
  - In public, Americans typically stand arms-length apart and will spread out in a room or on public transit.
  - Americans queue in lines and are offended by those that try to skip lines or do not wait their turn
  - In conversation, some Americans will tend to be private about age, money, weight, politics, religion, and sex.
- Time and Efficiency
  - “Time is money” – Americans value time and may be frustrated if they feel it has been wasted.
  - Americans will often consider efficiency to be getting the most done in the shortest amount of time.
  - Generally, best to be on-time or a few minutes early. Typical to apologize when late.
  - Meetings or gatherings typically have a scheduled start and end time. People may be in a hurry to leave when it is near the end time.





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to do and great  
events you won't  
want to miss!

**gt\_iss**